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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Friday, September 11, 2020, at 1 p.m.

Senate

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2020

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Faithful Father, our refuge and strength, give us such lawmakers that their lives will enable You to be glorified by bringing healing to our land. Lord, provide our Nation with physical, mental, social, and spiritual healing by the power of Your grace. Sustained by this grace, may our Senators seek to please You in all they do. Inspire them to give You cheerfully their highest allegiance.

Be gracious, mighty God, to our Nation and world. Empower us all until the words of our mouths and the meditation of our hearts are acceptable to You.

We pray in Your sacred Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. LOEFFLER). The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 1 minute in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

IOWA FARMERS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, this year has been one of the most challenging years for Iowa farmers during my 40 years in the Senate. Farmers have had to confront coronavirus supply chain disruptions, widespread drought, and a record windstorm that moved across our State.

During my 99 county meetings, I saw Iowa fields that were completely destroyed—150 miles long and 40 miles wide. The images of mature crops lying flat on the ground were heartbreaking. Iowans are a very resilient people, but the hurt the farmers have endured this year will be felt in our State for a few years to come.

Senator ERNST and I will keep fighting to strengthen Iowa's farm economy despite this year's very challenging situations.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, anyone watching the Senate yesterday saw another installment in an ongoing series that has become somewhat familiar. Republicans roll out yet another effort to forge a bipartisan compromise around coronavirus relief, and Democrats reply with partisan cheap shots and threats to block everything.

Republicans develop a serious plan to get historic amounts of additional

money in the pipeline for kids, jobs, and schools, and Democrats just point fingers, call names, and keep blocking American families from getting any more help before the November election.

In July, Republicans put forward a serious framework, but Speaker PELOSI and the Democratic leader refused to talk unless the starting point was their literally absurd \$3.4 trillion far-left wish list that even House Democrats called a stunt.

In August, with those talks stalled, Republicans proposed narrow agreements on specific urgent policies to help families, unemployment benefits, the Paycheck Protection Program. Democrats refused again. This time their invented excuse was that any assistance short of their entire wish list was too "piecemeal"—too "piecemeal"—and not worth doing.

If Democrats didn't get their diversity studies for the cannabis industry, stimulus checks for illegal immigrants, and tax cuts for blue State millionaires, they would make sure millions of Americans would lose their unemployment benefits and PPP would close. That is what they threatened, and that is what they did.

So here we are in September. Schools and colleges have gone without the \$105 billion that Republicans wanted to give them back in July. That is more money than Speaker PELOSI put in her bill.

American workers have gone without the second round of the PPP that Republicans proposed weeks and weeks ago. Speaker PELOSI had no money for PPP in her \$3.4 trillion bill.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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The race for treatments and vaccines has gone without the additional funding that Republicans wanted to deliver. Families have gone without the economic relief that Republicans wanted to put in their pockets. And Washington Democrats have just kept trying to run out the clock—run out the clock—until November.

But here is one thing: The Senate majority works for the American people. We fight for American families. We are not going to let Speaker PELOSI and the Democratic leader kill and bury coronavirus relief behind closed doors without putting every Senator on the record. So we have put together a new, targeted proposal containing several of the most urgent and most popular policies that would help Americans right now. Tomorrow, the whole Senate will vote on it.

It will be a procedural vote. It is not a vote to pass our bill tomorrow, precisely as written. It is a vote for Senators to say whether they want to move forward toward huge amounts of relief for kids, for jobs, for healthcare, or whether they are happier doing absolutely nothing.

That is what every single Senator will decide tomorrow. Do you want to do something—something—or do you want to do nothing?

Democratic leaders know this simple choice will put the spotlight on their partisan antics. They know this vote will expose their obstruction.

Speaker PELOSI and Leader SCHUMER were attacking our new proposal yesterday before they even read it, before it had even come out. I would normally make fun of that, but in this case it makes perfect sense because their position clearly is that they do not want any bipartisan relief whatsoever. They do not want any bipartisan relief whatsoever to reach American families prior to the election.

They didn't even need to see what we were proposing. If it helped working families in any way—in any way—between now and November 3, Speaker PELOSI and Leader SCHUMER knew for sure they opposed it.

Their red herrings and cherry-picked arguments have now given way to total dishonesty. Yesterday, our colleague from New York railed against a provision pertaining to critical supply chains, calling it some sinister giveaway to big business. A provision pertaining to critical supply chains he called a sinister giveaway to big business? That provision is cosponsored by his own Democratic ranking member on the committee. So either the Democratic leader is impugning his own ranking member right along with Republicans or else he simply doesn't know what he is talking about.

Likewise, the junior Senator from Vermont attacked this provision as “corporate welfare,” but he himself did not vote against this very provision in committee on two occasions.

They are so desperate to keep working families from getting any help be-

fore the election that some Democrats are now attacking things they previously supported. At this point it is just silly season on the Democratic side. They have run out of excuses not to legislate, and even their cheap shots just backfire in embarrassing ways.

So tomorrow—tomorrow—the Senate will cut through all the noise with one vote. Every Senator will either say they want to move forward, agree where we can, make a law to help people, and keep arguing over our differences later or say they prefer to do absolutely nothing.

Every Senator will vote on this significant package, which secures Federal unemployment benefits, reopens the PPP for a second draw, sends more than \$100 billion to keep kids safe in school, helps parents with childcare, helps families afford expenses or homeschooling, and rebuilds our strategic medical stockpile.

This is not a simplistic argument over big versus small. Republicans want more money for K-12 and college than was in the Democratic bill. We want more money for PPP, which their bill forgot to fund. These are bipartisan priorities that Democrats left behind and Republicans want to take care of.

So tomorrow—tomorrow—American families will learn who wants to make a law for them and who is happiest if they get nothing.

146TH KENTUCKY DERBY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, on a completely different matter, on Saturday, the world of sports once again revolved around my hometown of Louisville for the 146th Kentucky Derby. Like so many other events, the coronavirus made this year's derby look a little different.

The race had already been postponed for only the second time in history, and none of the 150,000 spectators who normally fill Churchill Downs were there to sing “My Old Kentucky Home,” but the most exciting 2 minutes in sports refused to be defeated.

The derby remains the longest continuously held sporting event, and this year's Labor Day derby proved worth the wait. The winning thoroughbred, Authentic, outlasted a ferocious challenge from the favorite. So I would like to extend the Senate's congratulations to the entire Hall of Fame team.

(The remarks of Mr. MCCONNELL pertaining to the introduction of S. 4547 are printed in today's RECORD under “Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.”)

Mr. MCCONNELL. I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Brett H. Ludwig, of Wisconsin, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Wisconsin.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, the amount of 1984-like doublespeak that comes out of the other side never ceases to amaze, and I guess it is becoming more and more extreme. The Republican leader calls his bill bipartisan? I would remind the leader that “bipartisan” means two parties, Democrats and Republicans. His bill is only a product of the Republican side.

The Republican leader said Democrats are delaying things. Was it Democrats who called for a pause? Was it Democrats who, when COVID was raging, said we had to assess the situation? Oh, no, it was the Republican leader who said those things. Meanwhile, Democrats in the House, supported by Democrats in the Senate, have passed a strong comprehensive bill. We have just been waiting and waiting for our Republican friends to get their act together so they might come close—even near to the moment that we need.

So, after taking a pause on COVID relief for 4 months, finally, finally, finally, Senate Republicans are realizing the damage that their delay has done to our economy and the Nation's health.

Yesterday, Leader MCCONNELL announced that by the end of the week, the Senate would vote on a new slimmed-down version of an already skinny Republican bill. We know what happened here. The leader did nothing for months, but the American people are demanding action. Republican Governors, local officials, hospitals, small businesses—everyone is demanding action. Restaurants, performance stages, and places are demanding action not just of Democrats but of both sides of the aisle.

So the leader had to do something. At first, he tried to cobble together a legislative response, but it failed spectacularly. Leader MCCONNELL was unable to bring it even forward for a vote.